

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Vern Buchanan’s proposals to help prevent future oil spills are making their way through Congress in bills that have passed House and Senate Committees.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee today passed legislation to eliminate liability limits for offshore drilling accidents like the explosion at Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico. And in the U.S. Senate, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved a bill Wednesday banning certain federal employees who oversee oil rigs from taking jobs in the oil industry for a year.

Buchanan’s legislation, the “Oil Spill Prevention Act” (HR 5572), included a two-year revolving door ban for employees of the U.S. Minerals and Management Service and eliminated liability limits for offshore drilling accidents like Deepwater Horizon.

“How many businesses have limits to liability when they have caused economic and environmental damages – pain and suffering?” asked Buchanan, a member of the Transportation Committee. “This bill would hold BP accountable for the billions of dollars in costs associated with oil spill and help ensure that drilling in the future is done more safely.”

Buchanan’s bill would also help prevent future spills by separating the inspections office responsible for safety and environmental protection from the leasing office that collects revenues, requiring random drug testing, mandating that missed inspections be rescheduled and eliminating categorical exemptions from environmental requirements. Buchanan’s bill has bipartisan support.

The bill was referred to the House Transportation Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee.

